

VIDEO POKER GAMES

Cross-reference to Related Application

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2 This application is based on and claims the benefit of
3 U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/319483, filed
4 August 21, 2002, entitled "Video Poker Games."

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6 This invention relates primarily to video poker games,
7 and more particularly to video poker games that are
8 programmed to play on an electronic video poker machine.
9 Based on achieving certain starting hand combinations, the
10 player receives one or more extra hands on his next round of
11 play. This process can continue to allow the extra hands to
12 create additional extra hands.

13 For example, if the player receives a Three-of-a-Kind or
14 better as a starting hand on a round of play, the player
15 would earn a free extra hand on the next round of play. The
16 player would make a wager to play the next round of video
17 poker and both hands would be played as if they were carrying
18 the same amount of wager, even though only one wager is made.

1 In effect, the player is playing the additional hand for no
2 extra cost.

3 The player would have to make a bet on the first hand in
4 the next round to receive the extra hand bonus. If the
5 player then made two Three-of-a-Kinds or better on the next
6 round he would receive two extra hands on the following round
7 and would play a total of three hands all for the cost of a
8 single wager.

9

10 **Background of the Invention**

11 Video poker that is played on an electronic video poker
12 gaming machine is designed to replicate the play of a hand of
13 poker. Typically, the player is not playing against any
14 other player's hands or against a dealer's hand; the player
15 is simply attempting to achieve the highest ranking poker
16 hand possible from the cards displayed to the player. The
17 higher the ranking of the poker hand achieved by the player,
18 the greater the player's winnings based on the number of
19 coins, tokens or credits wagered by the player. Typically, a
20 payout schedule is posted on the gaming machine to advise the

1 player of the payoffs available for certain winning card
2 combinations.

3 The forerunner of all electronic video poker gaming
4 machines is the video Draw Poker machine that deals cards
5 from a standard fifty-two card poker deck and displays a
6 single five card hand to the player. The player then selects
7 which of the five cards he wishes to hold (or discard
8 depending on the format of the gaming machine). The draw
9 poker machine then displays replacement cards for the cards
10 the player has discarded. The player wins or loses based on
11 conventional poker hand rankings for the resulting five card
12 hand.

13 In video Draw Poker, the conventional poker hand
14 rankings that are winning combinations are a Royal Flush, a
15 Straight Flush, a Four of a Kind, a Full House, a Flush, a
16 Straight, a Three of a Kind, a Two Pair and a Pair of Jacks
17 or Better. A payout table is established based on the number
18 of coins wagered by the player and the type of poker hand
19 achieved.

20

1 The classic draw poker machine has been modified to use
2 Jokers as wild cards or to use Deuces (or even other cards)
3 as wild cards. "Jokers Wild" and "Deuces Wild" draw poker
4 still display to the player a single five card hand and allow
5 the player to discard unwanted cards and receive replacement
6 cards. The payout table is modified to recognize the differ-
7 ing odds for achieving various poker hands when wild cards
8 are involved. Furthermore, different poker hand rankings are
9 used in the pay table to recognize different winning
10 combinations that can be achieved using wild cards.

11 There are many poker formats used in video draw poker.
12 These poker game formats include Jacks (or even Tens) or
13 Better Draw Poker, Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker, Double
14 Double Bonus Poker, Super Double Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus
15 Poker, Deuces Wild Poker, Jokers Wild Poker, Deuces and
16 Jokers Wild Poker, etc. Many electronic video poker gaming
17 machines are provided with a menu so that the player can
18 indicate his choice of the poker game format that the player
19 wishes to play and the player then makes his wager based on
20 upon that choice of poker game format. Each poker format has

1 its own pay table associated therewith.

2 U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873 (Moody) (the disclosure of
3 which is incorporated herein by this reference) describes an
4 electronic video gaming machine and method in which the
5 player may play multiple hands at the same time. The
6 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by
7 the player. One hand of five cards is dealt all face up.
8 The player selects none, one or more of the face up cards
9 from the first hand as cards to be held. The cards that are
10 held are reused from the first hand into all of the other
11 hands. Replacement cards for the non-selected cards are
12 dealt into the first hand and additional cards are then dealt
13 to the first hand, if needed, so that the first hand has five
14 cards. Additional cards are also dealt to all of the other
15 hands so that each hand is a five card hand. The poker hand
16 ranking of each five card hand is determined row by row. The
17 player is then paid for any winning poker hands based on a
18 pay table and the amount of the player's wager. The most
19 successful commercial embodiment of this multiple hand method
20 of play is a three hand game known as TRIPLE PLAY DRAW

1 POKER®, although there as also five hand, ten hand, fifty
2 hand and even one hundred hand versions of this multiple hand
3 game.

4 U.S. Patent No. 6,517,074 (Moody et al.) (the disclosure
5 of which is incorporated herein by this reference) describes
6 another electronic video gaming machine and method in which
7 the player may play multiple hands at the same time. The
8 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by
9 the player. A first hand of five cards is dealt all face up.
10 The player selects none, one or more of the face up cards
11 from the first hand as cards to be held. Replacement cards
12 for the non-selected cards are dealt into the first hand and
13 the player receives an award for any winning hand
14 combinations.

15 The original five cards are redisplayed into a second
16 hand. The player selects none, one or more of the face up
17 cards from the second hand as cards to be held. Replacement
18 cards for the non-selected cards are dealt into the second
19 hand and the player receives an award for any winning hand
20 combinations. This redisplay of the original hand,

1 discarding and replacement continues until all of the number
2 of hands selected to be played by the player are completed.

3 U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 (Hachquet) (the disclosure of
4 which is incorporated herein by this reference) and U.S.
5 Patent No. 6,135,883 (Hachquet) (the disclosure of which is
6 incorporated herein by this reference) each describes yet
7 another electronic video gaming machine and method in which
8 the player may play multiple hands at the same time. The
9 player makes a wager for each separate hand to be played by
10 the player, for example two hands. Two hands of five cards
11 are dealt all face up, with each hand having the identical
12 cards by suit and rank. The player selects none, one or more
13 of the face up cards from the first hand as cards to be held
14 and the player selects none, one or more of the face up cards
15 from the second hand as cards to be held. The cards selected
16 to be held from each hand may or may not be the same cards.
17 Replacement cards for the non-selected cards are dealt into
18 the first hand and replacement cards for the non-selected
19 cards are dealt into the second hand and the player receives
20 an award for any winning hand combinations in either or both

1 of the first and second hands.

2 It is an object of the present invention to provide a
3 new form of an electronic video poker game that provides the
4 player with one or more additional video poker hands on the
5 next round of play whenever the player achieves a certain
6 starting hand combination on the original round of play.

7 It is a feature of the present invention that whenever
8 the player achieves one of the predetermined types of
9 starting hand combinations on the original round of play of
10 video poker, then the player is awarded one or more
11 additional hands of video poker on the next round of play.
12 The additional hands of video poker on the next round of play
13 are played according to the multiple hand poker method
14 described in U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873; or U.S. Patent No.
15 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S. Patent No.
16 6,135,883. These one or more additional hands can be awarded
17 with or without the player having to make an additional
18 wager.

19 It is a further feature of the present invention that
20 the award of one or more additional hands may continue

1 consecutively as long as the player continues to achieve one
2 of the predetermined types of starting hand combinations on
3 the previous round of play of video poker.

4 It is an advantage of the present invention that the
5 player is provided with one or more additional hands of video
6 poker to play with having to make only one additional wager.
7 This increases the player's opportunity to achieve winning
8 payouts without significantly increasing the monetary risk to
9 the player.

10 Other objects, features and advantages of the present
11 invention will become apparent from a consideration of the
12 following detailed description.

13

14 **Summary of the Invention**

15 The method of the present invention begins with the
16 player playing a conventional hand of video poker. Whenever
17 the player achieves one of the predetermined types of
18 starting hand combinations on the original round of play of
19 the hand of video poker, then the player is awarded one or
20 more additional hands of video poker on the next round of

1 play. The additional hands of video poker on the next round
2 of play are played according to the multiple hand poker
3 method described in U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873; or U.S. Patent
4 No. 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S. Patent
5 No. 6,135,883.

6 These one or more additional hands can be awarded with
7 the player having to make only a single additional wager.
8 The award of one or more additional hands may continue
9 consecutively as long as the player continues to achieve one
10 of the predetermined types of winning hand combinations on
11 the previous round of play of video poker.

12 **Brief Description of the Drawings**

13 Figure 1 shows a representative electronic video gaming
14 machine of the present invention including a typical screen
15 display used in the method of play of the present invention
16 after the initial deal of the cards.

17 Figure 2 shows a representative electronic video gaming
18 machine of the present invention including a typical screen
19 display used in the method of play of the present invention
20 after the player has been awarded additional hands on the

1 next round of play.

2

3 **Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

4 The method of the present invention can be applied to
5 any poker format used for video poker. Figure 1 shows
6 generally at 10 a typical electronic video gaming machine
7 that is configured to provide to the player the method of the
8 present invention. The electronic video gaming machine 10
9 includes a conventional coin head 50 into which the player
10 can insert coins or gaming tokens and a slot 52 which leads
11 to a conventional bill acceptor mounted on the interior of
12 the gaming machine and into which the player can insert paper
13 currency. The use of coins, tokens or paper currency is the
14 mechanism by which the player wagers on the poker hands the
15 player wishes to play. As is also conventional in electronic
16 video gaming machines, a credit meter display 22 is provided
17 to show the amount of credits that the player has accrued on
18 the gaming machine 10 -- either by inserting coins, tokens or
19 paper currency or from winning plays achieved by the player.

20 Whenever the player makes a wager, the amount of the wager

1 is decremented from the credit meter display 22. Whenever
2 the player achieves a winning play during the play of the
3 game, the amount of the winning play is incremented on the
4 credit meter display 22.

5 A conventional payout hopper is also located on the
6 interior of the gaming machine and is used to dispense coins
7 or tokens to the player into a payout tray 56 when the player
8 wishes to collect any winning amounts the player has accrued.
9 Other suitable and conventional payout mechanisms can be
10 used, such as a ticket printer or other cashless payout
11 devices.

12 The gaming machine 10 also includes a video screen
13 display 20 of any suitable type upon which representations of
14 playing cards are displayed. In a preferred embodiment of
15 the present invention, one or more hands can be displayed on
16 the video screen display 20 at the same time. As shown in
17 Figure 1, a first hand: HAND ONE 60 is shown. Each hand
18 would preferably have five card locations preferably from
19 left to right in a horizontal row, although other manners of
20 displaying multiple hands can be used. The video screen

1 display 20 also contains a location at which the amount
2 wagered on each hand is shown, for example, "Bet Per Hand"
3 24.

4 A button panel 40 is also provided on the gaming machine
5 10 and the buttons mounted on the button panel 40 are used by
6 the player to control the operation of the gaming machine 10.

7 Any suitable configuration of the buttons on the button
8 panel can be used and, alternatively, conventional touch
9 screen technology can be used for any or all of the buttons
10 mounted on the button panel.

11 A typical button arrangement is shown on the button
12 panel 30 in Figure 1. A "BET" button 42 is provided to allow
13 the player to wager one credit at a time. A "BET MAX" button
14 44 is provided to allow the player to wager the maximum
15 amount of credits permitted by the configuration of the
16 gaming machine 10. Any number of credits can be set as the
17 maximum amount that it is possible to wager on each hand and,
18 typically, five credits will be the maximum number of credits
19 for any particular hand. Alternatively, a BET location 26
20 and a BET MAX location 28 can be provided on the video screen

1 20 to allow the player to wager by using conventional touch
2 screen technology.

3 A conventional "DEAL/DRAW" button 46 is also provided on
4 the button panel 40 which is used by the player to activate
5 the initial deal of the cards at the deal stage of the method
6 of play or the dealing of replacement cards at the draw stage
7 of the method of play as is appropriate. Similarly, a
8 DEAL/DRAW location 47 can be provided on the video screen 20
9 to allow the player to effect either the deal step or the
10 draw step by using conventional touch screen technology.

11 The button panel 40 is also provided with five "CARD"
12 buttons 48A, 48B, 48C, 48D and 48E associated with each
13 horizontal card location on the video screen display: card
14 button 48A is associated with the left most card location,
15 card button 48B is associated with the second from the left
16 card location, card button 48C is associated with the middle
17 card location, card button 48D is associated with the second
18 from the right card location and card button 48E is
19 associated with the right most card location. Each card
20 button is preferably aligned below the card locations so that

1 the player can easily associate the appropriate card button
2 with the appropriate card location.

3 The method of play of the various versions of the
4 present invention will now be described. After the player
5 has inserted an appropriate amount of coins, tokens or paper
6 currency to add a sufficient amount of credits on the credit
7 display meter 22, the player makes his initial wager. The
8 player may press the BET button 42 one or more times to bet
9 in single increments or the player may merely press the "BET
10 MAX" button 44 and the maximum number of credits are applied,
11 for example, five credits would be wagered. The player can
12 also use the touch screen locations to make his wager as
13 described above.

14 The present invention is played using a standard fifty-
15 two card deck. In alternative embodiments of the present
16 invention, one or more Jokers may be added to the
17 conventional deck of playing cards so that poker format games
18 using Jokers may also be employed.

19 The player makes a wager to participate in the method of
20 play. A first five card hand, HAND ONE 60 shown in Figure 1,

1 is dealt to the player.

2 Based on achieving certain starting hand combinations,
3 the player receives one or more extra hands on his next round
4 of play. This process can continue to allow the extra hands
5 to create additional extra hands.

6 For example, a starting hand of a Three-of-a-Kind or
7 better would entitle the player to an extra hand on the next
8 round of play. When the player engages in the next round of
9 play, the player makes a single wager and each of the
10 additional hands are treated as being played for the same
11 amount of the wager. Thus the player gets to play the extra
12 hand for no additional cost.

13 For example, if the player bet five credits and the
14 starting hand was a Flush, the player would receive a free
15 extra hand on the next deal. Before the next deal occurs,
16 the player plays out the first deal in accordance with the
17 method of play of conventional video poker by deciding which
18 cards he wishes to hold from the first hand. The player is
19 not required to hold the cards that caused a bonus hand to be
20 awarded for the next round of play, although in most

1 situations it would be to the player's advantage to do so.

2 After the player has made the selection of which cards
3 the player wishes to hold, if any, replacement cards are
4 displayed for the discarded cards in the first hand. The
5 player is paid for achieving winning poker hand ranking based
6 on a pay table.

7 The method of play then proceeds on to the next round.
8 The player preferably would have to make a bet on the first
9 hand in the next round to receive the extra hand bonus for no
10 additional cost, although alternatively the player could be
11 allowed to play the next round without having to make an
12 additional bet. If the player then was dealt two or more
13 Three-of-a-Kinds or better on the next round he would receive
14 two extra hands on the following round and would play a total
15 of three hands. The play of the extra hands would be
16 performed according to the method of played described in U.S.
17 Patent No. 5,823,873. The same cards that are held in the
18 first hand will also be held in the extra hand or hands and
19 the player receives replacement cards in each of the hands
20 and a final poker hand ranking is determined. Winning hand

1 combinations are paid out in accordance with a pay table.

2 Alternatively, the play of the extra hands would be
3 performed according to the method of play described in U.S.
4 Patent No. 6,517,074; or U.S. Patent No. 6,050,568 or U.S.
5 Patent No. 6,135,883.

6 For example, as shown in Figure 1, the player is dealt
7 the Seven of Spades, the King of Spades, the Queen of Spades,
8 the Two of Spades and the Four of Spades. Because starting
9 HAND ONE 60 has the poker hand ranking of Three-of-a-Kind or
10 better (namely a Flush), the player will receive an
11 additional bonus hand on the next round of play at no extra
12 cost.

13 The player then completes the play of HAND ONE 60 most
14 likely by holding the Flush. Assuming the player had made a
15 five credit wager, the player would win twenty-five credits
16 (see Table 1) for achieving a Flush.

17 As shown in Figure 2, if the player made a single five
18 credit wager on the next round of play, the player would
19 receive two hands, each being played for five credits. The
20 player would be dealt the same hand twice and as shown in

1 Figure 2, for example, the player could be dealt in HAND ONE
2 70 the Four of Spades, the Seven of Diamonds, the Four of
3 Clubs, the Four of Hearts and the Ace of Spades. HAND TWO 72
4 would be dealt with the identical cards by suit and rank.

5 Because the player has been dealt a Three-of-a-Kind in
6 each of HAND ONE 70 and HAND TWO 72, the player would be
7 awarded two additional bonus hands on the next round of play
8 at no extra cost as long as the player makes a wager to play
9 the first hand of the next round of play.

10 The player then completes the play of HAND ONE 70 and
11 HAND TWO 72 according to the method of play described in
12 Moody Patent No. 5,823,873. The same cards that are held in
13 one of the hands will also be held in the other hand and the
14 player receives replacement cards in each of the hands and a
15 final poker hand ranking is determined. Winning hand
16 combinations are paid out in accordance with a pay table,
17 such as the pay table shown in Table 1.

18 This method of play continues from round to round and
19 the player receives additional bonus hands at no extra charge
20 for each starting hand dealt to the player that has a poker

1 hand ranking of Three-of-a-Kind or better. In theory, a
 2 player who has a lucky streak could be playing five, ten or
 3 even more hands for a single additional wager on each round
 4 of play.

5 Any suitable pay table may be used and would be
 6 associated with the poker format being used by the player.
 7 For example, the classic poker hand format is Jacks or Better
 8 Draw Poker. A suitable pay table for Jacks or Better Draw
 9 Poker is shown in Table 1:

JACKS OR BETTER DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS WAGERED				
	1	2	3	4	5
POKER HAND RANKING	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	250	500	750	1000	4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	25	50	75	100	125
FULL HOUSE	8	16	24	32	40
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	25
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

TABLE 1.

1

2 If the method of any of the versions of the present
3 invention is used with one of the Joker poker formats, then
4 the standard deck of playing cards would include one or more
5 Jokers as would apparent to one skilled in the art and an
6 appropriate pay table suitable for one of the Joker poker
7 formats would be used.

8 While the invention has been illustrated with respect to
9 several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments
10 should be considered as illustrative rather than limiting.
11 Various modifications and additions may be made and will be
12 apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the
13 invention should not be limited by the foregoing description,
14 but rather should be defined only by the following claims.